

LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **December 10, 2002, Work Session**

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

CONSENT:

REGULAR: **X**

CLOSED SESSION:

(Confidential)

ACTION:

INFORMATION: **X**

ITEM TITLE: **Update on Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

RECOMMENDATION: This report is for informational purposes. Staff is seeking input on the Capital Improvement Plan for Parks and Recreation.

SUMMARY:

In 1997 the City completed a Recreation Facility Study, Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This plan included an inventory of existing public recreational facilities and an evaluation of their condition. The plan also assessed the demand for facilities and recreational programming and made recommendations for new and renovated recreational facilities. Subsequently, a Parks and Recreation Task Force, comprised of elected officials, City staff and citizens, formed and developed recommendations for a ten-year capital improvement plan. The plan was for the period of 1999-2009. This report is to update Council on the progress made since the development of the ten-year plan and to propose criteria and recommendations for future capital priorities.

PRIOR ACTION(S): none

BUDGET IMPACT: Budget impact will be reflected in the CIP proposal for FY2004-09.

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ATTACHMENT(S):

Summary Report, December 10, 2002

REVIEWED BY: lkp

**Summary Report
December 10, 2002
Council Work session
Update on Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

The Master plan of 1997 established three major goals for the City's Parks and Recreation facilities:

- ? Provide Lynchburg's citizens with safe, accessible and attractive facilities which encourage recreational use and which can be easily managed, maintained and staffed.
- ? Provide Lynchburg's citizens with a wide range of individual and family oriented outdoor recreation opportunities while preserving the natural, cultural, and historic qualities of park lands, maintaining high quality facilities.
- ? School sites should serve enrolled students as primary users with general community use coordinated to achieve maximum, sustainable use of fields and facilities.

Each goal is accompanied with objectives that include recommendations to bring park and recreation facilities into compliance with the American Disabilities Act; bring playgrounds into compliance with federal and state guidelines; develop recreational facilities in partnership with schools and private entities; bring all buildings into compliance with building and fire codes and correct mechanical and other system deficiencies; extend the trails system; and renovate existing athletic fields, tennis courts and basketball courts. Other objectives included recommendations for renovating the Grove Street building, developing new community parks, and developing new buildings and facilities to meet the specific needs of senior adults, youth, and indoor athletic program participants. The study assessed existing facilities, public preferences, and proposed funding priorities.

The Parks and Recreation Task Force continued the work from the study and developed a ten-year plan for Parks and Recreation improvements. This plan placed an emphasis on renovation of existing facilities and expanding the capacity for athletics by making improvements to existing fields. Much of the work proposed in the first five years of the plan has been accomplished. The projects proposed for the next five years are more conceptual in nature and include the development of new parks and facilities.

It is important to note that several major projects have developed outside of the recommendations of the master plan. These projects include the soccer complex, the stadium renovations, development of land adjacent to City Stadium, improvements to the Armory/Community Market complex, renovations to the Aviary and a skatepark.

The following is a summary of the major projects that have been completed since 1998.

Tennis Court Renovations

- ✍ EC Glass
- ✍ Riverside Park
- ✍ Peaks View Park
- ✍ Fairview Heights Community Center

Athletic Fields

- ✍ Peaks View Park –soccer fields, lighting improvements
- ✍ Marvin Bass Elementary School
- ✍ Hutcherson Elementary School
- ✍ TC Miller Elementary School
- ✍ Fairview Heights Community Center

Playground Renovations

- ✍ Fairview Heights Community Center
- ✍ Riverside Park
- ✍ Daniels Hill Community Center
- ✍ Biggers Park
- ✍ Fort Avenue Park

Trail Improvements and Expansion

- ✍ Percival's Island
- ✍ Expansion of James River Heritage Trail to Ed Page Entrance

Community Center Renovations

- ✍ Jefferson Park
- ✍ Yoder
- ✍ Fairview Heights

Basketball Court Renovations

- ✍ Fairview Heights
- ✍ Biggers Park
- ✍ Fort Avenue Park

Other

- ✍ Improvements to Grove Street customer service area and administrative offices
- ✍ Restroom improvements at Blackwater Creek Athletic Area, Peaksview Park and Riverside Park
- ✍ Misc. fencing improvements
- ✍ Misc. parking lot improvements
- ✍ Improvements to Miller Park Pool

The following capital projects are currently underway:

- ✍ Renovation of College Hill and Diamond Hill Community Centers
- ✍ Design and construction of restroom at Ed Page Entrance
- ✍ Design and construction of bridge to Point of Honor
- ✍ Construction of bike trails and bikeway in Peaks View Park
- ✍ Playground renovations in Peaks View and Miller Parks
- ✍ Completion of improvements to Biggers Park
- ✍ Site improvements at Jefferson Park
- ✍ Planning for Miller, College, Perrymont, and Younger Parks
- ✍ Improvements to Little League field at Miller Park
- ✍ City Stadium baseball renovations
- ✍ Installation of ventilation system at the Community Market
- ✍ Renovation to the heating system at the Community Market
- ✍ Planning for the Allen Morrison property

The Master Plan discussed the need and recommended new recreational facilities. These recommendations include a nature center, two new community parks, renovation of the Grove Street building and a multi-use community center. These needs are still relevant today. The popularity of recreational programming has outpaced the spaces available for offering services. There are several opportunities to consider for the future development of park and recreational facilities. These include a nature and environmental center at Lynchpin Industrial Park and the development of a park and gymnasium on the Allen-Morrison site. Another possibility under exploration is the possibility of acquiring the Social Security building on Park Avenue. The Social Security office is relocating this spring, freeing that building for possible acquisition by the City. The use of the Social Security building for staff offices would provide additional class spaces and community meeting spaces at Grove Street. Other long-term possibilities include a senior center at Fort Hill School and a park in the Tyreeanna neighborhood.

In developing capital plans for the future, staff recommends utilizing the following criteria and processes:

- ✍ Update the ten-year plan on an annual basis.
- ✍ Continue staff assessments of the existing parks and recreational facilities on an annual basis. Priority should be given to maintaining our existing parks and facilities in excellent condition. The assessment should include, but not be limited to, playgrounds, buildings, shelters, athletic fields, park infrastructure such as benches, tables, signage and fencing, hard surface courts, drainage, parking and the landscape.
- ✍ Coordinate park and facility renovations with Buildings and Grounds to maximize use of the major building repair fund and project management.
- ✍ Master plan and fund improvements to existing parks.
- ✍ Continue to upgrade and renovate existing recreational facilities, including Grove Street. Grove Street does not meet current fire and building codes as well as the standards set forth by the Americans Disability Act.
- ✍ Continue to explore and plan for joint use of parks, schools and recreational facilities to meet both school and community needs.
- ✍ Continue to plan for development of new parks.
- ✍ Recognize that several recreational facilities are old and are in need of study and repair. These include the Aviary and the football arena at City Stadium.
- ✍ Explore opportunities for expanding recreational space through unique acquisitions and partnerships. These include the social security building on Park Street, the Lynchburg United Soccer complex, the Awareness Garden and a skatepark.
- ✍ Continue to leverage City funds for grants and partnerships.
- ✍ Continue to adhere to the goals established by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. When possible, coordinate the development of park and recreation facilities with neighborhood planning.
- ✍ Continue to place an emphasis on park development on the riverfront.

Project priorities include:

- ✍ Playground, athletic field, court, parking and trail improvements.
- ✍ Renovation of existing buildings/facilities including Grove Street, Miller Park Pool pumphouse and bathhouse, football field at City Stadium, Armory/Community Market complex, Aviary, and community centers.
- ✍ Planning and renovation of existing parks including Miller Park, Perrymont Park, Sandusky Park, Younger Park, College Park, and Heritage Park.

- ✍ Development of the Ivy Creek Nature Center at Lynchpin Industrial Park.
- ✍ Support of partnerships to build soccer complex and skatepark.
- ✍ Develop park on land adjacent to City Stadium to include a gymnasium and public meeting spaces.
- ✍ Explore use of existing buildings including the Social Security building and Fort Hill School.
- ✍ Explore feasibility of developing a park in the Tyreanna/Pleasant Valley neighborhood in conjunction with the neighborhood plan.
- ✍ Land acquisition for expansion of the trail system.

The opportunities for parks and recreation improvements and facility expansion far outweigh available funding. Not one strategy or goal will meet the community need for recreational facilities. It is important to focus our resources, yet maintain a flexibility to take advantage of cost-effective opportunities. Emphasis should be placed on maintaining our existing parks and recreational facilities, redeveloping existing facilities and parks, and maximizing the best opportunities for expansion of parks and recreational facilities.